GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE
LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:5261
ANSWERED ON:30.04.2008
PLANTATION OF MEDICINAL PLANT ALONG NHS
Maharia Shri Subhash

Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Union Government has constituted a Committee to study the feasibility of planting medicinal plants along the National Highways; and

(b) if so, the details thereof alongwith the recommendations of the said Committee and the action taken/ proposed to be taken by the Government in this regard?

Answer

THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR HEALTH & FAMILY WELFARE(SMT. PANABAKA LAKSHMI)

(a) & (b) : A Core Group was set up under chairpersonship of Chief Executive Officer, National Medicinal Plants Board to finalise the action plan for plantation of medicinal plants along the National Highways. The Core Group decided that instead of formulating an action plan for medicinal plants, it would be more appropriate to have generic guidelines on plantation along the highways.The Core Group also recommended that plantation and commercial exploitation of medicinal plants is not advisable along the highways due to the following reasons:

(a) Intensive operational and maintenance requirements for these plantations including requirement of huge quantities of water for irrigation;

(b) Safety hazards associated with commercial exploitation and intensive working;

(c) Aesthetic value and visual quality of the road corridor will suffer due to non-homogeneity of the crop;

(d) Destabilisation of the soil and the road embankment due to frequent tilling operations, continuous interference and frequent use of water.

National Highway Authority of India has already formulated a Tree Plantation Strategy which includes specifications for plantations and also recommends particular species like Neem,jamun, Arjun,Mahua,Lasora etc having medicinal value for different agro climatic regions in the country.